



*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **SOUTHERN ARIZONANS CHARGED WITH DISTRIBUTING TONS OF MARIJUANA TO THE EAST COAST**

TUCSON, Ariz. - Walter K. Riedesel, 52; Michael W. Hamblen, 41; Julia A. Relford, 52; Ollie Shouse, 49; all of Tucson; and Ruben P. Contreras, 44, of Oro Valley, Ariz. were arrested yesterday and charged today with Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana and Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Marijuana. The complaint alleges that they conspired to distribute in excess of 25 tons of marijuana from Arizona to the U.S. East Coast from approximately 2001 to 2008. An arrest warrant was issued for Guilio F. Esposito, 29, of Tucson, on the same charges.

Hamblen was released from federal custody today. The remaining defendants are being held in federal custody pending their detention hearing set for Tuesday, June 17, 2008.

The criminal complaint alleges that during the course of the conspiracy several seizures of U.S. cash and drugs took place, including \$125,000 seized in Ohio in 2004; \$42,780 seized in Tucson in 2005; \$398,373 seized in Texas in 2007; 749 pounds of marijuana seized in Arizona in March 2008; and 750 pounds of marijuana seized in New Mexico in May 2008.

A conviction for the conspiracy charge carries a maximum penalty of life in prison, a \$4,000,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the assigned U.S. District Court Judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

A criminal complaint is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Drug Enforcement Administration, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, Oro Valley Police Department, Counter Narcotics Alliance and the Marana, Ariz. Police Department. The prosecution is being handled by James T. Lacey, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson.

CASE NUMBER: 08-03185M  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-153(Riedesel, et al)

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